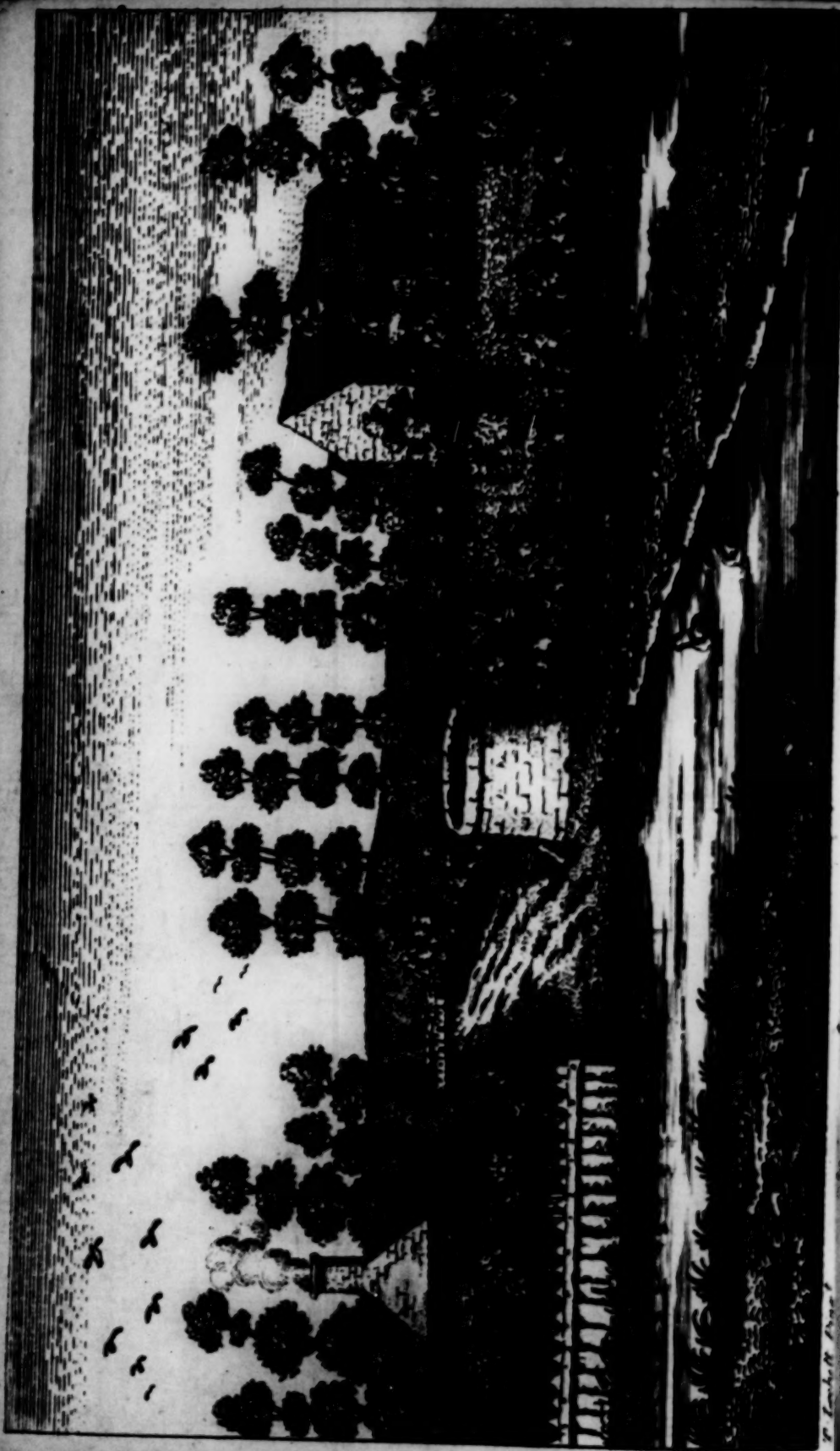


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THE
Nature, Properties, and Medicinal Uses,
OF THE
MINERAL WATER
AT
NOTTINGTON,
NEAR WEYMOUTH, DORSET.
[PRICE ONE SHILLING.]



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W. L. Linnæan Society.

AN
ACCOUNT
OF THE
Nature, Properties, and Medicinal Uses,
OF THE
MINERAL WATER
AT
NOTTINGTON,
NEAR WEYMOUTH, DORSET.

By JOHN CRANE, PHYSICIAN,
AT DORCHESTER.



With a VIEW of the WELL, in it's present State.

*Vulnera perfanat Maculas terit Ulcera ficit
Vires refutuit, fit tamen Arte data.*

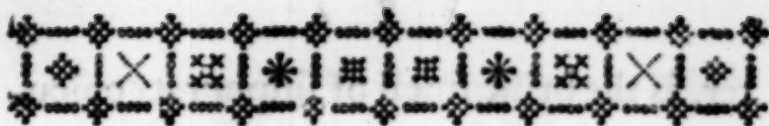


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O F T H E
NOTTINGTON WATER.

NOTTINGTON is a small Hamlet, between five and six miles from Dorchester; about the distance of two miles from Weymouth; nearly a furlong westward of the turnpike road, between these two towns.

The mineral spring of this place has long been in great repute, for the cure of various diseases, both by its external, and internal use.

The first thing which generally attracts the notice of those who examine this Wa-

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ter,

ter, is the brisk smell of sulphur it copiously emits, plainly evincing a strong impregnation of that mineral.

In attempting to describe the flavour of any particular mineral water, words are never sufficiently expressive of it, so as to come up to its genuine taste.

This Spring in the opinion of many, resembles very much to the palate, a weak solution of sal polychrest; it has been compared to a boiled egg by some, somewhat stale, and by others to rotten eggs.

It is but justice however to say of the Nottingham Water, that it is by no means so disgusting as sulphureous waters in general prove, and appears to be much less so to many people, than those of Harrogate, and Cheltenham.

With

With respect to its specific gravity, when compared with that of distilled water by means of the hydrostatical balance, the difference between them is so trifling, as not to be an object of any consideration on that account, the latter is rather the lighter of the two.

In colour it has a milky, slight blue tinge, which appears to be considerably heightened by viewing the Water in a tin vessel.

That there is an acidity in this water is not to be doubted in the least, from its property of turning white on being mixed with alkalis, and from its curdling immediately with soap.

This acid is most undoubtedly inherent in its sulphur, and affords a perfect confu-

tation of the opinion, which that learned Physician Dr. Stahl, most erroneously maintained, viz. "*That Acids do not pre-exist in Sulphur, but are merely Creatures of the Fire.*" An assertion easily disproved in later times, by all who are become better acquainted with the component parts of this mineral, by the progressive improvements made in chemistry.

That the Nottingham Water abounds with an alkali, manifestly appears, from an analysis of its component parts, by the usual process of evaporation—The salt which is afterwards extracted from the insoluble residuum, on being well rubbed into raw meat, occasions it to turn very red, in conformity to the well known property of alkaline nitre.

That

That it has no chalybeate or ferruginous impregnation is most readily inferred, from a tincture of galls or such other astringent having no further effect in changing the appearance of the Water than giving a slight tinge of an amber cast, scarcely deeper than straw colour.—And it does not appear that it borrows any impregnation from the pyrites which usually gives the springs in the neighbourhood where it abounds their ferruginous and chalybeate qualities.—The stones in the vicinity of the well apparently resemble common stones, and the neighbouring springs do not differ at all from common simple water.

That it contains no oker is presumed on the first inspection of the water, such
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mineral springs as evidently contain oker have a yellow matter resembling a sort of thin cream floating on their surface, and the stones at the bottom and sides of such springs, are most commonly tinged very much with the same—nothing of which is discoverable here, or in any spring in the neighbourhood of the well.

That the salt contained in the Nottingham Water is not of sufficient strength to restrain the volatility of the sulphur, appears from the effluvia before mentioned, which it so readily and plentifully gives off.

In evaporating the water, this sulphurous smell is entirely removed by the time half the water is exhaled in the operation,

The process of evaporating four quarts of the water to dryness in the common way,

way, leaves about two scruples or somewhat more of a brown reddish mass.

If however a glass retort is made use of, and the water is drawn off by a very gentle sand heat with great circumspection, almost a third more, may be gained from the same quantity of the water.

The salt which is afterwards extracted from the insoluble residuum, is in the proportion of ten grains to two, of the latter.

This salt when mixed with spirit of vitriol, causes a very considerable ebullition; affording thereby essential evidence of its alkaline quality, in addition to what has already been observed.

When this salt is rubbed with sal ammoniac, it has an urinous pungent smell, and when it is mixed with salt of tartar,

it

It gives off rather an offensive foetid odour.

It has been observed that a very pretty experiment may be made with this water, after being kept a proper time, and this without the trouble of a regular chemical process.

By keeping the Nottingham Water in bottles, for the space of a twelvemonth; or more; it affords a spontaneous partial analysis of itself, light bodies of different colours are observed floating on its surface, these are the sulphureous particles now all collected together, which were originally diffused throughout the substance of the whole.--These slender corpuscles if carefully taken up, and dried, and afterwards strewed on a red hot poker, or bar
of

of iron, flame and sparkle beautifully, into an infinite variety of colours, resembling a peacock's tail, very elegantly illustrating the formation of the variegated scum so frequently observed on the surface of many mineral waters, sulphureous as well as chalybeate.

A multiplicity of experiments have been made long since, on the Nottingham Water, with most of the various substances commonly made use of in investigating the properties of mineral waters, those which have been principally employed in this, were solutions of silver, lead, copperas, and alum, lime water, sea water, soap, volatile alkalis mild and caustic, tincture and powder of galls, and such other astringents, syrup of violets, &c.

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These experiments have been made by different persons at distinct periods of time, those made by Godfry, were in the year 1719, those by the late Dr. William Cuming, of Dorchester, in 1740, and those by Dr. Rutty, nine years afterwards.

Repeated trials of a more recent date by others, as well as several very lately made by the writer of these sheets, all tend indisputably to confirm the opinion universally received, and proved by all preceding experiments, that this water is principally impregnated with sulphur and the native alkaline salt or natron with which almost all the mineral waters in France so plentifully abound; and which many affirm to be the true nitre of the antients

antients.—This natron some are of opinion bears a nearer affinity to sal ammoniac than to saltpetre — Dr. Leigh, calls it a sea, and urinous salt — The natron (or anatron) which is taken out of a lake of stagnant water in the desert of Nitria in Ægypt, is described by Pliny, as an alkaline salt of a lixivate taste and perforated like a sponge.

In describing any mineral water it may be perhaps expected by some, that a very minute and satisfactory enquiry, into its contents and natural appearances shou'd not only be made ; but its inherent virtues also be fully explained, by any writer who engages in a task of this kind.

But such readers wou'd do well to bear in mind that this intricate subject

when every thing is duly considered, must ever necessarily remain involved in much doubt, and obscurity; and to recollect that the learning of Short, the accuracy of Shaw, the sagacity of the experimental Boyle, the ingenuity of the indefatigable Hoffman, and the subsequent labours of other ingenious men of later days, have altogether contributed much less than cou'd be wished to remove the veil thrown over these arcana of nature.

It is not to be doubted, but that the greater part of mineral waters most assuredly contain certain inherent principles, from which their virtues derive their source respectively, which are not to be ascertained by any experiments whatever; they are placed infinitely too far beyond our reach

reach, the imperfection of human nature utterly precluding us from the power of considering them as the objects of sense.

Thus for instance, with respect to the inherent specific properties of the Nottingham Water now under consideration.

Who is able to ascertain positively to which particular quality of it, its acknowledged healing virtue is indebted—Is it owing to its sulphureous acid? to its alkaline salt? to a due combination of both, co-existing in this salutary spring? or perhaps after all, to some active principle in the elementary water itself, not cognizable by the organs of our senses, rather than to any of its distinct properties which can be rendered the immediate object of them by any chemical analysis.

Almost

Almost every body very readily admits, and that with all due applause, that very great discoveries and useful improvements are continually making in analysing mineral waters, that the means of doing it to greater advantage are much facilitated by the labour, an ingenuity, of modern chymists, as well as of many curious naturalists—That enquiries of this nature, afford an almost inexhaustible fund of rational entertainment to speculative men fond of such researches, who shou'd by no means be discouraged in following their favourite recreations at once so amusing, and instructing—But with regard to medical practitioners the case is very different, to whom some bounds ought to be set to the time employed in such lucubrations.

“ *Est*

" *Est modus in rebus sunt certi denique Fines* " it is their more immediate province, to attend to the good effects of mineral waters, making such use of their known properties, as may best tend to promote the art of healing diseases.

The satisfaction arising from thus employing their time, and talents, will prove the best consolation for their self-denial in foregoing researches, more curious, than useful, when carried too far by those on whom the public have a powerful and just claim, for a larger portion of their time, than they otherwise leave it in their power to afford, to such as stand in need of their constant daily attendance.

It may therefore perhaps be deemed sufficient for the purpose of this small tract,
which

which is written principally to recommend the known qualities of this Water, to repeat once for all, that the predominant minerals which impregnate the Nottingham spring are sulphur, and a native alkaline salt—That alkalis, and acids, co-exist in it in such a manner as to form the peculiar combination : which contributes altogether to give this celebrated spring healing qualities, which (under due management) may be rendered of great benefit to mankind in various diseases.

Dr. Ruty in his synopsis of mineral waters places this spring in the first class of nitro-sulphureous waters, and as the virtue and singular utility of these combinations in medicine are acknowledged on all hands, it is earnestly recommended

to

to physicians, by this learned writer, to search their respective neighbourhoods in order to increase the catalogue of such medicinal springs, as an object of much importance to the community.

If at the same time it was generally better understood, that they were ready to take the pains of registering the cures performed by the waters in their vicinity, such communications would probably be made to them from time to time, by many who derive material benefit from their use, as would furnish useful histories, by which the virtues of mineral waters would be better ascertained, their reputation consequently advanced, and a more general use made of them for the good of all those afflicted with

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the complaints, which experience has proved them an effectual remedy for.

That this may in some measure be brought about with respect to the Nottingham Water, is the principal inducement the writer has for intruding a second time into the closet of the reader.



OF THE VIRTUES OF THE
NOTTINGTON WATER,

THIS Water has long been deservedly famous for its great efficacy in curing various diseases, more particularly those of the skin, which it radically effects, removing all eruptions and foulnesses of it both by the internal and external use of the spring duely persisted in.

It most admirably tempers ebullitions of the blood; it is cleansing, cooling, and yet penetrating, few mineral waters perhaps equal it in attenuating gross humours of the habit, by means of its

subtle, penetrating, sulphureous, spirit
it pervades the minutest vessels.

In impaired digestion with loss of appetite (whether from too free living or otherwise) attended with great debility, experience has proved it of singular use, in strengthening the digestive powers of the stomach, and restoring the tone of its fibres.

It helps to remove effectually obstructions of the liver, spleen, and other viscera: it relieves grievous head aches, and has been remarkably useful in curing the excruciating pains of the cramp.

Assisted with suitable remedies adapted to the occasion, it has been known to cure a most obstinate jaundice of long standing; and in slighter attacks of that complaint, its success has been very frequent.

It entirely destroys the different species of worms which infest the human body, and with less trouble and inconvenience, than the use of many other anthelmintics occasion.

In the gravel this water is drank to very great advantage to the sufferer, as it scarcely ever fails in promoting the discharge of sand in considerable quantities, when it is persevered in for some time; it clears the urinary passages, and has been serviceable in some cases, which were looked upon as ulcerations of the kidneys from the attendant symptoms.

In weakneses of the nervous system, where the patient is low and quite dispirited, this Water has the happiest effects, especially in some particular habits

habits of a scorbutic tendency, with dejection, loss of strength and appetite, not unfrequently accompanied with blotches, spots, and other eruptive appearances of the skin.

Used externally, and internally by persons of corpulent habits, who become unweildy suddenly, the Nottingham Water is serviceable in reducing them to a more salutary standard, removing spontaneous lassitude, and checking this injurious tendency to a too rapid corpulency.

In an incontinence of urine this Water will alleviate the complaint, and will probably be found to effect much more, when trials are made of it more frequently, by those who have the misfortune to be afflicted with this troublesome, and hitherto incurable disease.

But

But in nothing, has the peculiar property of this Water in correcting the vitiated juices of the body, been more manifestly seen; than in the healing of old wounds, which a scorbutic taint, or depraved humours of the habit, had occasioned to break out afresh, and in ulcers which from similar causes, either were never fairly healed up, or if they were so pronounced, were exceedingly apt to break out again from time to time, on any great change of the constitution of the air; or in the diet of the person diseased, from any violent fatigue undergone, or from any excess unguardedly committed.

A remarkable recent case of the kind under consideration lately occurred, in
which

which the superior efficacy of the Nottingham Water, over many other mineral waters in the kingdom, was fairly proved by a respectable gentleman; in healing up a wound of long standing, which had baffled every attempt made to effect a cure by the waters at several of the most eminent places of resort; and which he had despaired of ever finding that relief for, which he has now happily obtained, by persevering some time in the external and internal use of this healing spring, which has given him (as it were) a new constitution, and repaired the injuries his habit had sustained by residing in hot climates.

In some kinds of erysipelas, drinking this Water has been recommended with
 success

success, but the efficacy of the external application of it seems rather equivocal; and indeed in this disease few outward applications are admissible with safety—dry meal applied to the parts affected is perhaps one of the best, as well as the safest topics.

In strumous inflammations of the eyes, the use of this Water may be persevered in both externally and internally, till a cure is effected, which it eventually brings about, in a shorter space of time, than almost any other remedy, and with greater security against relapses.

It has been the custom with the inhabitants of this neighbourhood (for time immemorial) to drink this Water chiefly about the month of march, before the

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spring

spring rains fall, when they look upon the Water as possessing its greatest degree of strength. — But the company who frequent Weymouth in the season for sea bathing, from july to october inclusive, drink this Water in dry seasons to great advantage,—For want of proper convenience this spring has not been made use of externally for a considerable time past so much as it is to be hoped it will be in future, when some proposed improvements for that purpose have taken place.

By bathing, the Water is taken into the habit by the absorbent vessels, and carried through the lymphatic system, this would be still more effectually promoted by making use of it warm.

A warm bath of the Nottingham Water,
analogy

analogy leaves us little or no room to doubt, will be found at least equal to that of Harrowgate in curing hard tumors, paralytic pains, ulcers, scrophulous complaints, bruises, strains, lameness, and weakness. — In most colical complaints in general, in nephritic colics, and even in nervous hysteric colics, (with proper management in other respects) it will be found a most useful remedy.

It must not however be denied that there are certain particular circumstances, under which the indiscriminate use of this Water would be prejudicial. — It is deemed improper for persons under an hectic fever, and is equally so for those who have tubercles of their lungs, and some contingent circumstances may

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arise

arise during a course of it, which may for a time render it necessary to desist both from its external, and internal use, till such obstacles are removed; it is therefore proper in the use of this, as well as in other mineral waters, that it should be "*Arte data.*"

There are however fewer exceptions to the general use of this spring, than to most other mineral waters, and consequently less danger to be incurred, from an indiscriminate use of it by those who are obliged to have recourse to it without the benefit of advice.

Some people to whom the use of the Nottingham Water has been enjoined, have been recommended to take an emetic, and some mild purgative before they entered on a course of the Water.

These

These steps may perhaps be necessary sometimes, where there is a nausea at the stomach, or where the particular state of the bowels, may require their being previously cleansed—and to scrophulous patients more particularly, such evacuations are exceedingly useful prior to drinking and bathing.

Otherwise in general, as this Water passes very readily off for the most part by the urinary passages, and keep the body moderately open ; it is seldom very necessary, to make use of any previous evacuations,

When indeed the natural discharges do not properly occur, as they ought ; both purgatives and diuretic medicines should be exhibited ; by the use of which
properly

properly managed, the Water has shortly after its usual good effects.

When the Water is detained at any time rather too long in the habit, nothing facilitates the operation of diuretics and contributes to keep off feverish heat from the system, more than an occasional use of the lancet.

Moderate exercise is advisable during a course of this Water, and riding seems the most eligible way of taking it.

No very strict diet is enjoined in ordinary cases, salted meat however, fish and eggs, should not be eaten.

It is a circumstance which never can be sufficiently regretted, that histories of cures effected by the Nottingham Water from time to time, have never
been

been authenticated, in a manner to engage the attention of the public in general, or that of the afflicted in particular, labouring under complaints which it is so effectual a remedy for; no register of cures performed, having been preserved.

Although the writer of these sheets has had ample information, and some personal experience of the undoubted efficacy of this spring in various diseases, so as to warrant his recommending the use of it in private practice, he is aware that to rest the reputation of it on his bare assertion would be a most unbecoming presumption in him; it is with a view to procure a series of well attested histories of cures in future, that he undertakes an office, (he would be better pleased to see
placed

placed in abler hands) of digesting the communications he may receive through a channel (judged to be as little excepti-
onable as possible) of cures effected from time to time, with such observations on those which fall under his own immediate inspection, as may tend to promote this undertaking, which has for its object, the rendering of this mineral Water of more general use.

Had a plan of this kind been adopted many years ago, the public would have been in possession of such a list of cures as would have removed every doubt of the wonderful efficacy of this healing spring, and it would not have been necessary at this time to have recalled the attention of the public to this medical spring by celebrating

celebrating its due praises *de novo*.

The Well has been of late in a very bad condition from neglect, and will continue less useful to the public, till proper steps are taken to put it in order.

The most obvious method to put an effectual stop to the uncleanly abuses so long and justly complained of, will be to have it properly covered in, and a pump erected; that those who drink the Water, may have it in the utmost purity.

A stone cistern sunk at a proper distance to receive the waste water, conveyed by a trough, will serve as a proper reservoir, for the purpose of washing diseased animals.—The abhorred idea of their being dipped in the Well, has deterred many people from using the

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Water,

Water, and common decency requires, that such loathsome objects should be kept from the sight of those, who repair to the Well, to drink the Water.

The expedient at present made use of, to purify the spring after these pollutions, by an opening made in the side of the well, level with the surface of the ground; to clear it of the foul water, is attended with a particular inconvenience.—The adjoining rivulet, not unfrequently flows freely through the opening into the well, which necessarily lowers the strength of the mineral water, and consequently diminishes its medicinal virtues, more or less, in proportion as the flood prevails.

The approach to the spring is at present extremely inconvenient, it affords

no

no shelter in bad weather to those who frequent it, and many other awkward circumstances attend its present state, which all who have occasion to visit it complain of, and wish to see remedied.

Whilst the writer of this tract, had it in contemplation to submit to the public a plan to render the spring of more general use, by proposing the most obvious means to remove the obstacles to this desirable end.—He did himself the honour to communicate his design to some gentlemen of fortune, whose property near the spring gave them a right to command this attention from him.—Two of these gentlemen were mutually disposed to remedy the defects complained of, at their own private expence; which rendered

any application to the public from the writer on the plan he had proposed, not only unnecessary, but under these circumstances improper.

The lord of the hundred also did him the honour to signify by letter, his assent to any improvements to be made at the Well by which the public were to be benefited; it not only was a mark of respect due to these gentlemen, to lay before them the intended repairs necessary to be made to preserve the Water, but there were local circumstances with respect to the right of its property, which rendered it incumbent on him to act with becoming attention to each of the gentlemen, without presuming to understand the validity of either of their claims,

claims, the discussion of which by no means belonged to him to enter into.

If the writer's plan of fitting up the Well by public contribution had been advisable, it was recommended to have a pump room erected of a circular form; the pump to have been in the center, with a circular stone seat round the inside wall, to have had a proper cistern with a trough or channel to convey the waste water to a reservoir at a convenient distance for external use—It was intended to supply the pump room with glasses, for the convenience of those who drink the Water, and a key, or keys, were to be lodged at one of the adjacent houses, to be delivered from time to time, to all who called for them for access to the pump, and some other conveniencies

conveniencies were intended for the better accommodation of the public.

All persons who derive any material benefit by the use of the Nottingham Water, are requested earnestly to leave an account of their respective cases in the hands of Mr. Delamotte, at his Library in St. Thomas's Street, Weymouth; who is to collect the histories of cures performed by it—By these communications, an opportunity will be afforded of ascertaining the virtues of the water more fully than has been done hitherto; of extending its reputation, and bringing it into more general use; which it is presumed will eventually be found equal to the waters of Harrowgate or Cheltenham, in the cure of various maladies, more particularly
scorbutic,

scorbutic, scrophulous, and cutaneous diseases.

Since these sheets went to the press, the Well has been properly cleansed, a stone wall has been built round it, and by the same benevolent hand, if the writer is not misinformed, it is further intended to convey the water by a trough to a cistern for external use. — Though the plan on which this has been conducted, falls rather short, of what it is hoped will be hereafter effected; it still redounds much to the credit of this disinterested benefactor to the public, who does not aim at establishing any claim whatever to the property of the well, by what he has already done, or means further to do; his sole motive being to render this
 mineral

mineral Water of more general use, by removing the nuisances complained of; that all who drink it, may partake of it in its purest state.

By these means this Well fallen in some measure of late into disuse, but never in- to the least discredit as to its medicinal virtues, will flourish with renewed and augmented splendor, and prove hereafter useful to thousands yet unborn; by the divine help, without which the virtues of mineral springs are of no avail.

Ni Deus adjuverit, Viresque afflaverit Undis:

Issa juvet nulli, Nottoniensis Aqua.

18 AP 68
THE END.



